

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 EB-08 AID-05 OMB-01 IO-13
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FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8425
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USNATO
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 02716

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MT, XG
SUBJECT: MALTESE-ITALIAN DISCUSSIONS: GOM TRIES A NEW
- TACK

REF: VALLETTA 2673 (DTG 181309Z AUG 78)

1. ITALIAN DCM LA MARTE INFORMED CHARGE AUGUST 23 THAT
GOI HAD RECEIVED A NOTE VERBALE FROM GOM ON AUGUST 21.
AS USUAL THE NOTE WAS DELIVERED BY THE MALTESE EMBASSY IN
ROME. LA MARTE PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING ROUGH TRANSLATION
OF THE SUBSTANTIVE PORTIONS OF THE NOTE. (ALTHOUGH THE
NOTE WAS IN ENGLISH THE ITALIAN EMBASSY HERE ONLY HAS AN
INFORMAL ITALIAN TRANSLATION.)

2. BEGIN TRANSLATION: "WITH REFERENCE TO YOUR NOTE OF
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AUGUST 16, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GOI, PRESUMABLY IN CON-
SULTATIONS WITH THE FRG, HAS COMPLETELY IGNORED THE
FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE MALTESE GOVERNMENT'S
PROPOSALS. AFTER THE EXPIRATION OF THE TIME LIMIT AGREED
UPON, THE GOI IS NOW VAGUELY SUGGESTING A VAGUE PROCEDURE
WHICH WHILE EXCLUDING ONE OF THE PREVIOUS MAJOR EUROPEAN
NEGOTIATORS, NAMELY FRANCE, IS NOW TRYING TO INVOLVE

DIRECTLY TWO ARAB COUNTRIES WITH WHICH THE GOM HAS ALREADY STARTED DETAILED NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT THE NEED OF RESORTING TO HUMILIATING SCRUTINY (OF MALTA'S ECONOMIC REQUIREMENTS) WHICH WAS OBVIOUSLY INTENDED ON THE PART OF THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AS A DELAYING TACTIC. NONETHELESS, THE GOM WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS THE FORM AND SUBSTANCE OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH THE GOI VIS-A-VIS THE ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION FOR AFTER MARCH, 1979 WHICH IS CURRENTLY BEING ACTIVELY PURSUED BY THE MALTESE AND LIBYAN GOVERNMENTS." END TRANSLATION.

3. LA MARTE SAID THE ITALIANS WERE SURPRISED BY THE PROMPTNESS WITH WHICH THE MALTESE HAD REACTED TO THEIR NOTE. ACCORDING TO LA MARTE, AMBASSADOR DA-RIN SENT HIS COMMENTS ON THE GOM NOTE TO ROME YESTERDAY, RECOMMENDING AGAINST ANY FURTHER TALKS WITH THE GOM ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION (I.E. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE) OUTSIDE THE DIALOGUE FRAMEWORK. LA MARTE EXPECTS THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WILL NOT RESPOND TO THIS NOTE IMMEDIATELY BUT RATHER CONTINUE ITS "WAIT AND SEE" POSTURE. THE GOI WILL, HOWEVER, PROBABLY CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE POSSIBILITY OF DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES RE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR MALTA SO THAT THE EUROPEANS WILL BE IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS SUCH ASSISTANCE WITH THE MALTESE IF AND WHEN THE DIALOGUE IS RESUMED.

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4. LA MARTE COMMENTED THAT THE ITALIANS WERE INTRIGUED BY THE WAY THE NOTE JOINED IN ONE SENTENCE ITS SUGGESTION FOR DISCUSSIONS ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH THE "ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION" BEING PURSUED WITH LIBYA. THE ITALIAN VERSION IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE "ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION" IS ONLY REFERRED TO AS A MATTER OF FACT AND HAS NO DIRECT IMPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE GOM AND THE GOI ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION OR WHETHER THE MALTESE INTENDED TO IMPLY THAT GOI MIGHT BE ABLE TO USE THESE TALKS TO, IN SOME WAY, INFLUENCE THE NEGOTIATIONS THE MALTESE HAVE STARTED WITH LIBYA; THE ENGLISH VERSION, WHICH WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY HERE AUGUST 25, MAY HELP CLARIFY THIS POINT.

5. CONTRARY TO OUR EARLIER INFORMATION THE FRENCH DID NOT RECEIVE A SEPARATE NOTE FROM THE MALTESE GOVERNMENT SUSPENDING THE DIALOGUE. INSTEAD THE FRENCH CHARGE HERE WAS CALLED IN BY THE MCFA AND GIVEN A COPY OF THE AUGUST 11 NOTE ADDRESSED TO THE ITALIANS. WILSON

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